

**July 6, 2001**

**UNDER SECRETARY FOR HEALTH'S INFORMATION LETTER**

**MARK WOLCOTT AWARDS FOR CLINICAL EXCELLENCE**

1. This letter announces the acceptance of nominations for the 2001 Mark Wolcott Awards for Clinical Excellence. Established in 1996, this award program recognizes outstanding Veterans Health Administration (VHA) health care practitioners who are deserving of special recognition for their contributions to enhance clinical care. It was named after Mark Wolcott, M.D., who dedicated over 40 years of his life to serve and improve the quality of health care for our veteran population.

2. Dr. Wolcott's vision, commitment, and dedication were noteworthy during his tenure on two separate assignments in VHA Central Office as the Associate Chief Medical Director for Clinical Affairs and as the Chief of Research in Surgery. His other Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) assignments included Chief of Surgery and Chief of Staff at VA Medical Center Salt Lake City, UT, Chief of Thoracic Surgery at Augusta VA Medical Center, and Chief of Surgical Service at VA Medical Center in Miami, FL.

3. Two award categories have been established, Excellence in Clinical Care Delivery and Excellence in Clinical Care Leadership.

a. **Excellence in Clinical Care Delivery.** The recipient is a practitioner in any health care setting who has demonstrated excellence in "hands on" direct patient care.

b. **Excellence in Clinical Care Leadership.** The recipient is a health care practitioner in a leadership or management position who has demonstrated excellence through exceptional support for direct patient care providers, including support of innovations enhancing the quality of direct patient care delivery.

4. This award is given annually. The nominees must be VHA employees currently practicing at least 5/8 time in any health care profession. The winners will each receive a plaque and a cash award of \$5,000.

5. Each facility Director and VHA Central Office Chief Consultant, and Clinical Program Director may nominate one candidate in each category per year. If the contributions are due to the collaborative effort of two or more individuals, these individuals may be nominated as a team.

6. An evaluation committee appointed by the Chief Patient Care Services Officer reviews all nominations. The nomination package needs to include:

a. A letter from the facility Director, VHA Central Office Chief Consultant, or Clinical Program Director summarizing the basis for the nomination.

b. Concurrence by the Network Director for field nominees, or the VHA Chief Program Officer for VHA Central Office nominees.

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- c. Current curriculum vitae, resume, or other summary of education, training, and work history.
- d. Letters of support outlining the nominee's contributions.
- e. A summary of the nominee's achievements clearly identifying the nomination category. The summary should not exceed three pages in length and should address the items in either subparagraph 6e(1) or 6e(2) which follow:

**(1) Award for Excellence in Clinical Care Delivery**

- (a) Evidence that the nominee exemplifies Dr. Wolcott's excellence in the delivery of care and has had an effective role in improving the quality of health care for veteran patients.
- (b) Evidence that the nominee has been a positive role model for the health care profession and is recognized by management and colleagues for excellence and dedication in the provision of care.
- (c) Evidence that the nominee works effectively with the health care team to promote excellence in the delivery of clinical care.
- (d) Evidence that the nominee is recognized by the patients served as an outstanding health care practitioner.

**(2) Award for Excellence in Clinical Care Leadership**

- (a) Evidence that the nominee's leadership has significantly contributed to improving the quality of patient care, either locally, throughout the network, or nationally.
- (b) Evidence that the nominee supports originality, creativity and innovation in the delivery of direct clinical care.
- (c) Evidence that the nominee's outstanding leadership is recognized by management, colleagues, and subordinates.

**7. Submission**

- (a) Submit an original and five copies of the nomination package to:

Department of Veterans Affairs  
Office of the Chief Patient Care Services  
Attention: Pat Dunn (112D)  
810 Vermont Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20420

- (b) The nomination package is due no later than August 31, 2001.

8. Inquiries regarding this award may be directed to Pat Dunn at (202) 273-8502.

S/ Frances Murphy, M.D.  
Thomas L. Garthwaite, M.D.  
Under Secretary for Health

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